

**REMARKS**

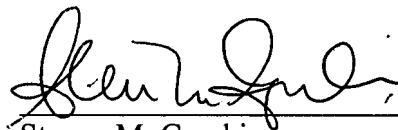
Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are presently pending in this application.

Claim 1 is hereby amended to add "a block section along the sipe is divided into a shoulder side region and a center side region by a center line of the block section" as suggested by the Examiner. The amendment finds support at least in Figs. 3-5 of the instant application. JP '220, EP '397 and the other cited references clearly fail to disclose or fairly suggest the features in claim 1 as now more clearly recited. Moreover, the other cited references clearly fail to supply the deficiencies of JP '220 and EP '397.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (with the exception of the Issue/Publication Fees) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: May 10, 2007